

Dixie County Emergency Management Services

Hurricane

Hurricane Season is June 1 - November 30

"Preventing the loss of life and minimizing the damage to property from hurricanes are responsibilities that are shared by all."

Throughout this website, information has been provided regarding actions that you can take based on specific hurricane hazards. The most important thing that you can do is to be informed and prepared. Disaster prevention includes both being prepared as well as reducing damages (mitigation).

You should be able to answer the following questions before a hurricane threatens:

- T** What are the Hurricane Hazards?
- T** What does it mean to you?
- T** What actions should you take to be prepared?

The following publications can help you answer these three questions.

1. Against the Wind - Protecting Your Home From Hurricane Wind Damage
2. Avoiding Hurricane Damage - A Checklist For Homeowners
3. Hurricane Fact Sheet - from the Federal Emergency Management Agency

HURRICANE	TROPICAL STORM	TROPICAL DEPRESSION
A hurricane is a tropical cyclone, which generally forms in the tropics and is accompanied by thunderstorms and a counter-clockwise circulation of winds.	An organized system of strong thunderstorms with a defined surface circulation and maximum sustained winds of 39-73 mph.	An organized system of clouds and thunderstorms with a defined surface circulation and maximum sustained winds of 38 mph or less.

One of the most important decisions you will have to make is **"Should I Evacuate?"** If you are asked to evacuate, you should do so without delay. But unless you live in a coastal or low-lying area, an area that floods frequently, or in manufactured housing, it is unlikely that emergency managers will ask you to evacuate.

That means that it is important for you and your family to **HAVE A PLAN** that makes you as safe as possible in your home. Your family's plan should be based on your vulnerability to the Hurricane Hazards. You should keep a written plan and share your plan with other friends or family.

- T Discuss the type of hazards that could affect your family.
- T Know your home's vulnerability to storm surge, flooding and wind.
- T Locate a safe room or the safest areas in your home for each hurricane hazard. In certain circumstances the safest areas may not be your home but within your community.
- T Determine escape routes from your home and places to meet. These should be measured in tens of miles rather than hundreds of miles.
- T Have an out-of-state friend as a family contact, so all your family members have a single point of contact.
- T Make a plan now for what to do with your pets if you need to evacuate.
- T Post emergency telephone numbers by your phones and make sure your children know how and when to call 911.
- T Check your insurance coverage - flood damage is not usually covered by homeowners insurance.
- T Stock non-perishable emergency supplies and a Disaster Supply Kit.
- T Use a NOAA weather radio. Remember to replace its battery every 6 months, as you do with your smoke detectors.
- T Take First Aid, CPR and disaster preparedness classes.

There are certain items you need to have regardless of where you ride out a hurricane. The disaster supply kit is a useful tool when you evacuate as well as making you as safe as possible in your home. The following is guidance on building a Disaster Supply Kit. Your needs may require the addition of other items.

Disaster Supply Kit

Water - at least 1 gallon daily per person for 3 to 7 days.
 Food - at least enough for 3 to 7 days.
 Blankets/Pillows, etc.
 Clothing
 Seasonal/Rain Gear/Sturdy Shoes
 First Aid Kit/Medicines/Prescription Drugs
 Special Items - for babies and the elderly
 Toiletries - hygiene items
 Moisture wipes
 Flashlight/batteries
 Radio
 Battery operated and NOAA weather radio
 Cash - banks and ATM's may not be open or available for extended periods.
 Keys
 Toys, books and games
 Important documents in a waterproof container
 Tools - keep a set with you during the storm.
 Vehicle fuel tanks filled
 Pet Care Items

Disaster prevention includes modifying your home to strengthen it against storms so that you can be as safe as possible. It also includes having the supplies on hand to weather the storm. The suggestions provided here are only guides. You should use common sense in your disaster prevention.

There are things that you can do to make your home more secure and able to withstand stronger storms.

RETROFITTING YOUR HOME

The most important precaution you can take to reduce damage to your home and property is to protect the areas where wind can enter. According to recent wind technology research, it's important to strengthen the exterior of your house so wind and debris do not tear large openings in it.

You can do this by protecting and reinforcing these critical areas:

1. One of the best ways to protect a home from damage in wind storms is to install impact-resistant shutters over all large windows and glass doors. Not only do they protect doors and windows from wind-borne objects, but they can reduce damage caused by sudden pressure changes when a window or door is broken. Laminated window systems (plastic bonded to glass) are another option, and are a particularly good choice for either building a new home or adding to an old one.
2. Your home has either double or single entry doors. If they are solid wood or hollow metal they probably can resist wind pressures and hurricane debris. However, if you are not sure whether they are strong enough, take these precautions:
 - < Install head and foot bolts on the inactive door of double-entry doors.
 - < Make sure your doors have at least three hinges and a dead bolt security lock which has a minimum one inch bolt throw length.
 - < Since double entry doors fail when their surface bolts break at the header trim or threshold, check the connections at both places. Be sure the surface bolt extends into the door header and through the threshold into the subfloor.

A great time to start securing - or retrofitting - your house is when you are making other improvements or adding an addition. Remember, building codes reflect the lessons experts have learned from past catastrophes. Contact the local building code official to find out what requirements are necessary for your home improvement projects.

FLOOD INSURANCE

The National Flood Insurance Program, is a pre-disaster flood mitigation and insurance protection program designed to reduce the escalating cost of disasters. The National Flood Insurance Program makes federally backed flood insurance available to residents and business owners. Flood damage is not usually covered by homeowners insurance. Do not make assumptions. Check your policy.

National Flood Insurance Program call
1-888-CALL-FLOOD ext. 445, TDD# 1-800-427-5593.